

Carlisle Station Gateway and Citadels

Feedback Summary - November 2019

Executive Summary

In July 2019, the Leaders of the Borderlands Councils, together with UK and Scottish Government Ministers announced a £394.5 million investment package for projects within the Borderlands region, through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

One of these projects is 'Carlisle Station Gateway and Citadels'. This aims to create a new high-profile gateway development for Carlisle, centred around the Railway Station, the Citadel buildings and Caldew Riverside. It aims to boost economic prosperity by attracting people to live, study, visit and work in the area.

The first phase of the project will be improvements at Carlisle Railway Station. £15 million of investment has been allocated to the project from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal subject to the production of an outline business case.

As part of the development of the project, Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council held a consultation period between Wednesday 18 September and Wednesday 9 October 2019. This included public events at Carlisle Railway Station and the Lanes Shopping Centre. The consultation process informed the public of our objectives for Carlisle Railway Station and invited them to review the key issues and opportunities identified at the station.

The consultation asked the public's opinions on our objectives and the four key components of the project which were:

- ❖ Court Square.
- ❖ Station Entry and Interior.
- ❖ South of Station, Car Park and Access.
- ❖ Junction Improvements.

Respondents were largely positive towards the project with 85% of respondents supporting the improvements proposed to Carlisle Railway Station. The respondents were particularly supportive of the improvements to Court Square, better car parking facilities and maintaining the historic integrity to the station and surrounding buildings.

A number of respondents mentioned the Turkish Baths, wanted us to explore the potential for a transport interchange at the station and improve cycle provision. This will be taken into consideration when we develop our concept designs. A number of respondents requested more detailed plans of the project. These will be forthcoming in the next stage of consultation which will take place in early 2020.

Comments made by the respondents have been recorded and will be used to advise the future direction of the Carlisle Railway Station project.

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Introduction

In July 2019, the leaders of the Borderland Councils and UK and Scottish Government Ministers signed an agreement setting out the framework, project and programmes that are included in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. This deal has resulted in £394.5 million being secured for investment in our region.

One of these projects is the 'Carlisle Station and Citadels' project. The first stage of this project will focus on Carlisle Railway Station with the second stage focusing on the Citadels. The UK government has allocated £15 million for the first phase of works at Carlisle Railway Station, subject to the production of an Outline Business Case.

Background

Cumbria County Council in partnership with Carlisle City Council, is seeking to make improvements to Carlisle Railway Station. Carlisle Railway Station is located within the city centre and accommodates two million passengers per year. The station is the largest interchange in the Borderlands region, providing access to branch line services from the West Coast Mainline to the Cumbria Coast Line, Tyne Valley Line, and Settle to Carlisle Line and Glasgow and South Line.

As part of the development of the project Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council held a consultation period between Wednesday 18 September and Wednesday 9 October 2019. This included public events at Carlisle Railway Station and the Lanes Shopping Centre. The consultation process informed the public of our objectives for Carlisle Railway Station and invited them to review the key issues and opportunities identified at the station.

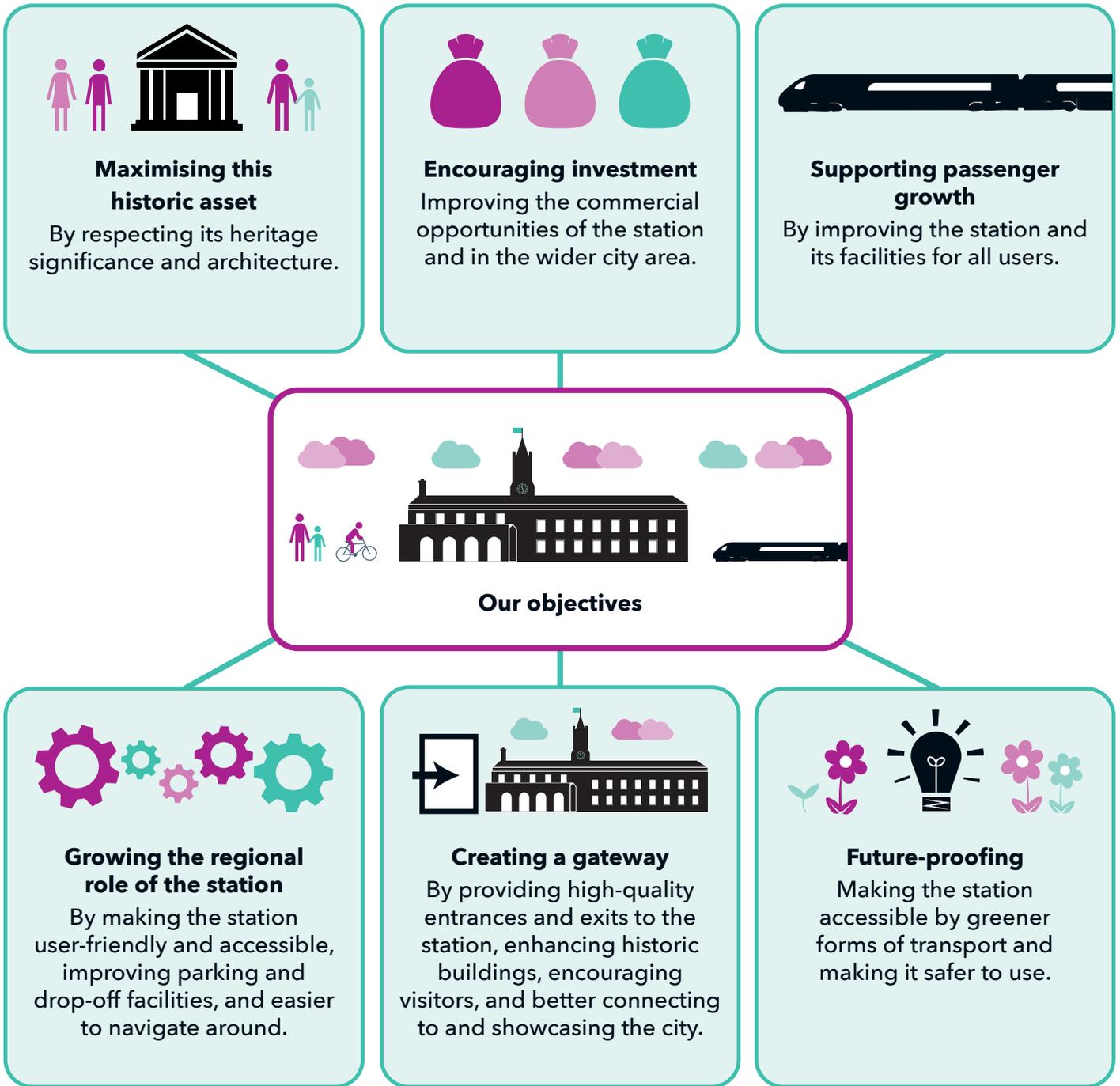
The consultation highlighted the public's opinions on our objectives and the four key components of the project which were:

- ❖ Court Square.
- ❖ Station Entry and Interior.
- ❖ South of Station, Car Park and Access.
- ❖ Junction Improvements.

Further background can be found in the consultation document.

Objectives

We developed a set of objectives for Carlisle Railway Station and asked for views from members of the public.



The consultation responses identified broad support for our objectives, with 98% of respondents in the consultation process identifying that they felt we had correctly identified the project.

Consultation

Introduction

A Communications Plan was prepared to outline the proposed communications and consultation approach for the project.

The Communications Plan for the project identified a number of groups of internal and external stakeholders. All of these groups were invited to engage with the consultation.

Timeline

A summary of the main consultation events are as follows:

- ✦ 18 September 2019
 - Start of consultation period.
- ✦ 20 - 21 September 2019
 - Consultation event at Carlisle Railway Station
- ✦ 27 - 28 September 2019
 - Consultation event at The Lanes Shopping Centre
- ✦ 3 October 2019
 - Consultation event for strategic stakeholders and local businesses at the Hallmark Hotel.
- ✦ 9 October 2019
 - End of consultation.

Promotion

Flyers advertising the events were sent to local businesses located inside and the area immediately surrounding the station. 'Door drops' facilitated by the Local Area Team ensured local residents and businesses received flyers advertising the consultation.

Twenty-four social media posts were used to advertise the consultation event, posts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram reached circa 55,000 people. Promotion also took place across the county council's 'owned' digital channels including cumbria.gov.uk and regular e-bulletins signposting people to a dedicated landing page for the consultation (www.cumbria.gov.uk/CSGCC), this page received 3,000 views during the consultation. This activity was supported by Carlisle City Council's social media platforms.

The county council's Press Office secured coverage in all relevant local newspaper titles and across media outlets, including the BBC and ITV. Interviews were lined up with representatives from Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council.

Signage and a consultation board were placed near the entrance and exits of Carlisle Railway Station, to capitalise on station-user footfall, summarising the purpose of the consultation and key dates.

The consultation

The public consultation was held between 18 September and 9 October 2019.

A consultation document was created to provide information on the proposed redevelopment of Carlisle Railway Station, alongside a series of complementary consultation display materials including large plans to assist the public with interpretation of the project. Materials were displayed at public consultation events and made available on the project website.

The primary method of consultation was through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was part of the consultation document. Respondents could submit the hard copy via freepost or use the online version on the project website.

Opportunities to clarify information about the consultation were provided both through email, phone, and at the public drop-in events.

Public consultation drop-in events

Public consultation drop-in events were held at Carlisle Railway Station on 21 September and 22 September 2019, The Lanes Shopping Centre on 27 September and 28 September 2019. The events were staffed by both Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council, providing further information and answering questions.



The primary method for attendees to provide feedback to the public consultation was via a questionnaire. The questionnaire was available on the project website, and hard copies with a freepost return address were made available at the drop-in events and at other locations in the area. In addition to the questionnaire, to capture the direct feedback received during the events, the technical staff attending the events provided notes of the issues and themes discussed during the events.

A drop-in event was held at the Hallmark hotel on 3 October 2019 with strategic stakeholders including members and local businesses within the area immediately surrounding the station.

Consultation responses have been summarised on the following pages. These summaries do not capture all comments made verbally during the events or received via the questionnaire/letter/email/telephone; they are included to give a general representation of the comments raised during the events and should not be taken to be exhaustive.

Consultation feedback

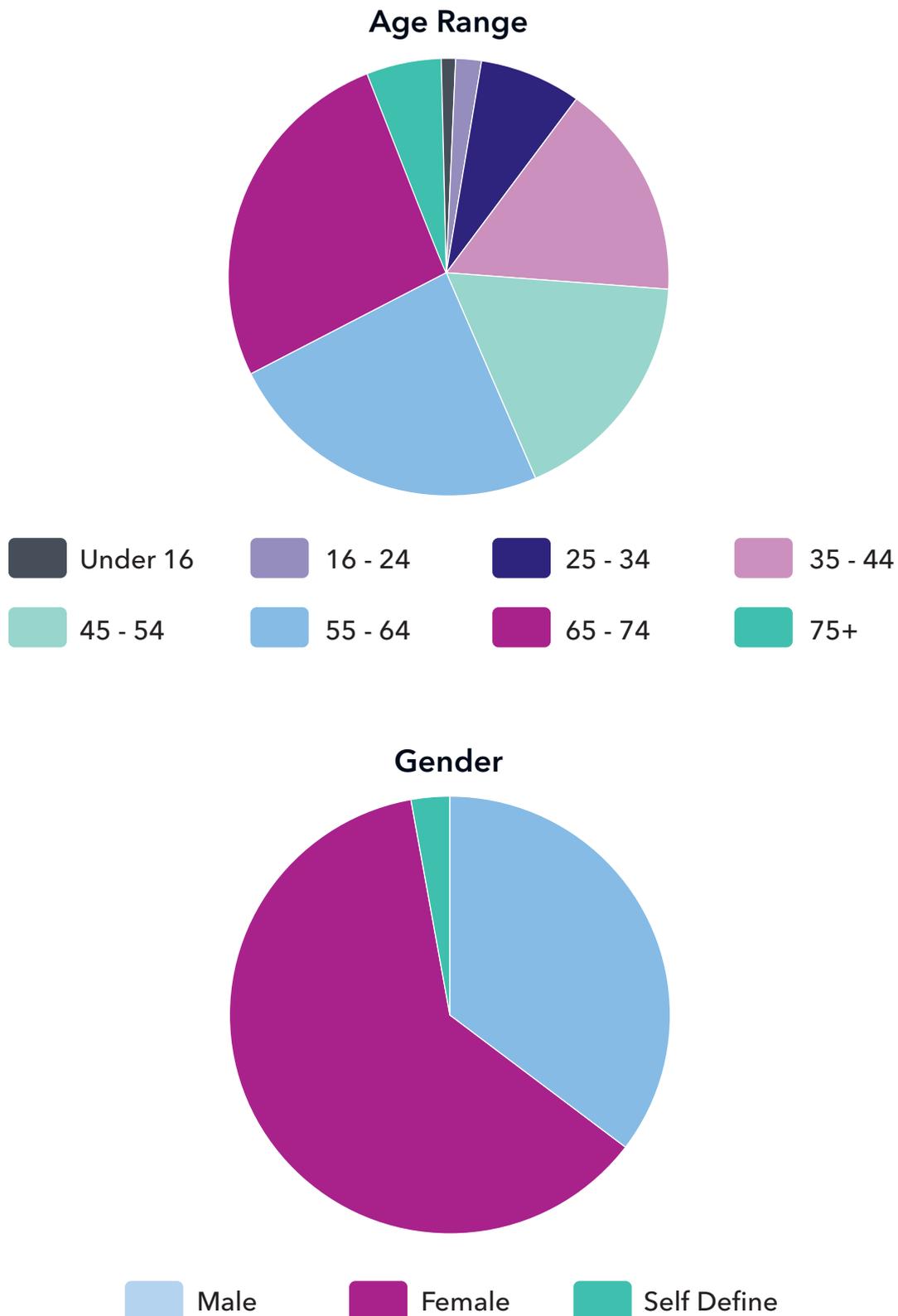
Approximately 400 people attended the four public consultation drop-in events.

In total, 151 questionnaire responses were received, and the respondents were primarily from the Carlisle region with a small percentage from outside Cumbria.

Demographic split of respondents

Figure 1 shows the age and gender of the respondents. The feedback received shows that the majority of the respondents fell between the 45 to 74 age brackets. The data collected highlights that only 15 of the respondents were aged 34 and under. Figure 1 also identifies that the respondents are predominantly female. In addition to this information around 11% of the respondents classified themselves as being disabled.

Figure 1: Age range and gender

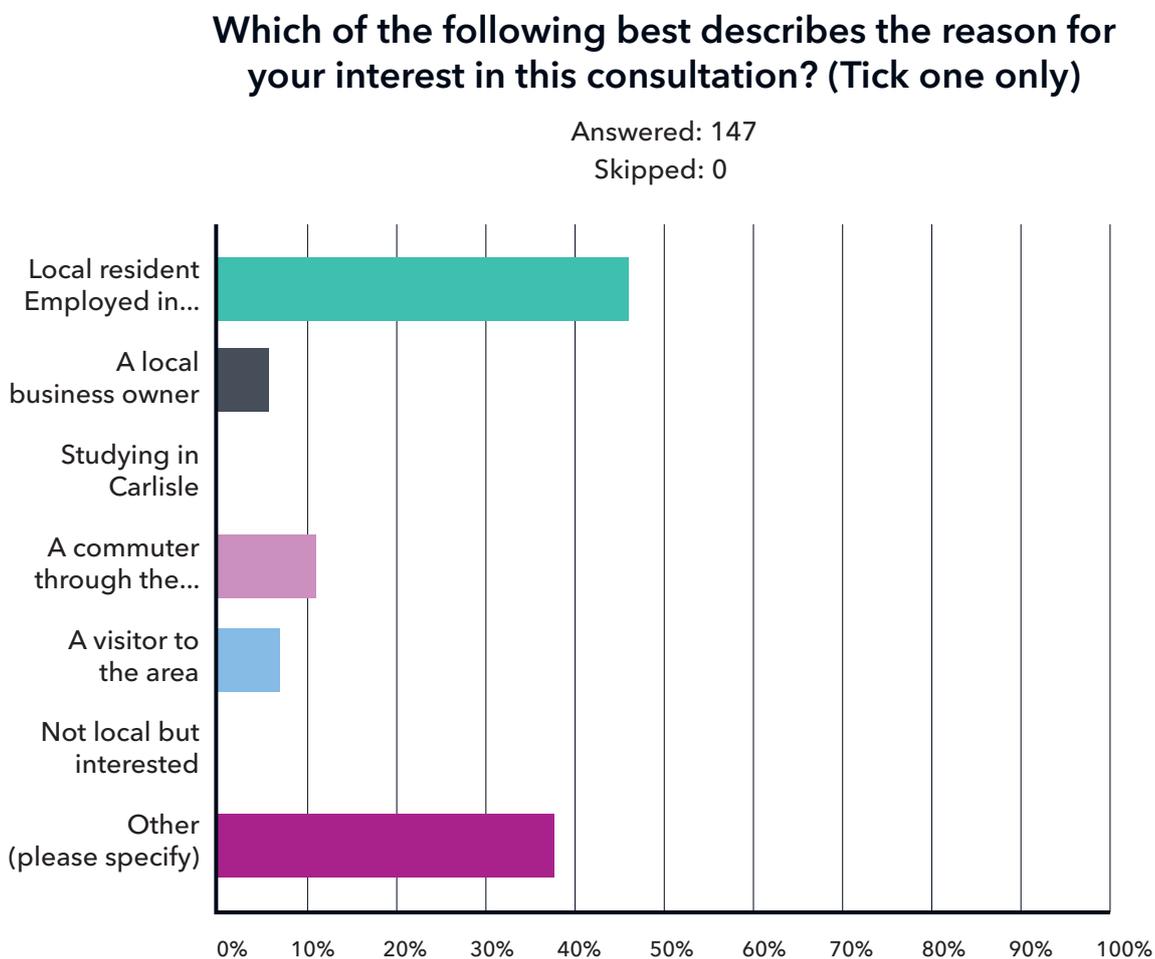


Reason for interest in the consultation

Figure 2 shows that a large proportion (46%) of the respondents identified their interest in the Carlisle Station project as the result of being a local resident employed in Carlisle. Around 38% of respondents did not classify themselves into the given categories and identified themselves as 'other', including retired residents, necessary train user and historian.

Approximately only 12% of respondents were commuters through the area. This is despite holding two consultation events at the station during peak times. Commuters are key stakeholders of this project, as regular users of the station. Alongside this no respondents identified as 'studying in Carlisle'. Further consideration is needed to ensure future consultations promote increased engagement from key stakeholders and a wider demographic, including young people.

Figure 2: Which best describes your interest in this consultation



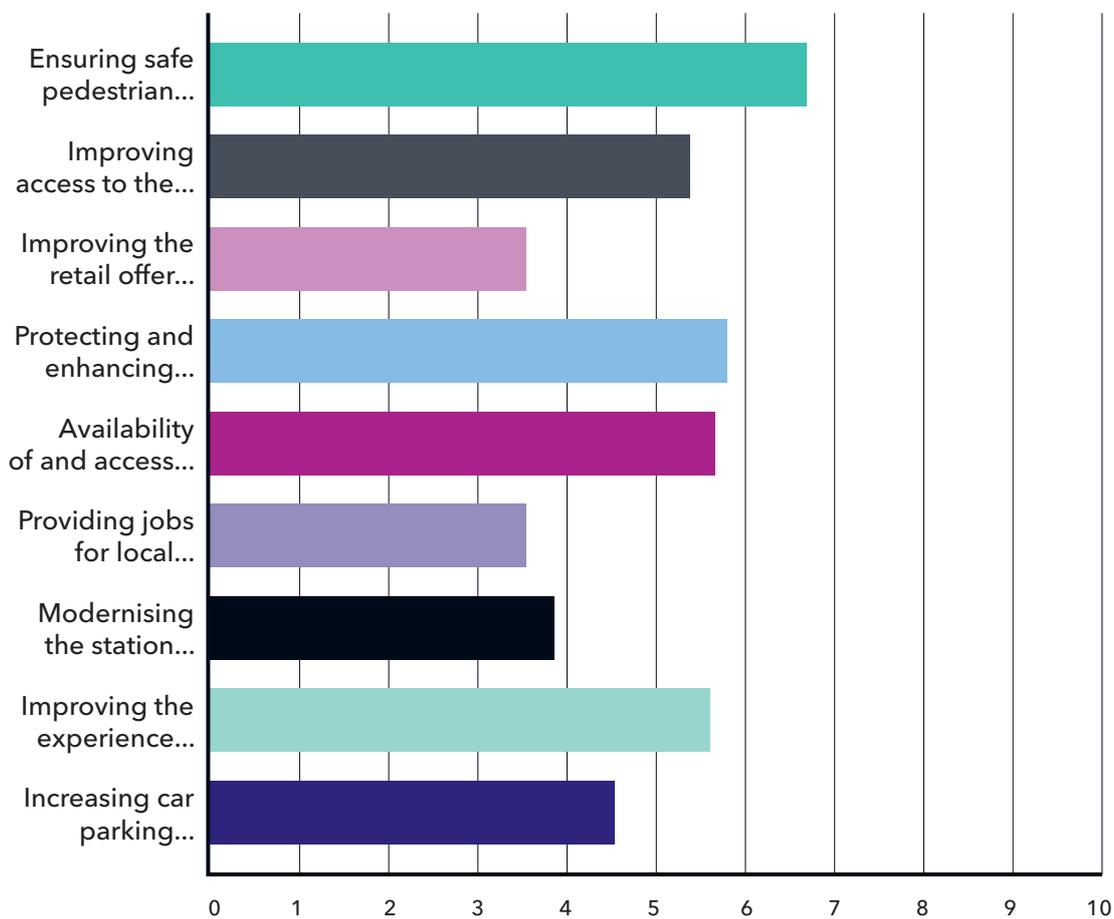
Which of the proposed changes are the most important

Figure 3 shows that respondents have identified ensuring pedestrian safe access to the station and protecting and enhancing historic buildings and places as the most significant issues that need to be addressed through this project. However it is clear from Figure 3 below that the other issues raised within this consultation are important factors that need to be addressed when the project team develop the options for the station.

Figure 3: Most important issue regarding the proposed changes to the station

With regard to the improvement of Carlisle Railway Station, which issues are most important to you? (Please place in order of importance to you - 1 being most important).

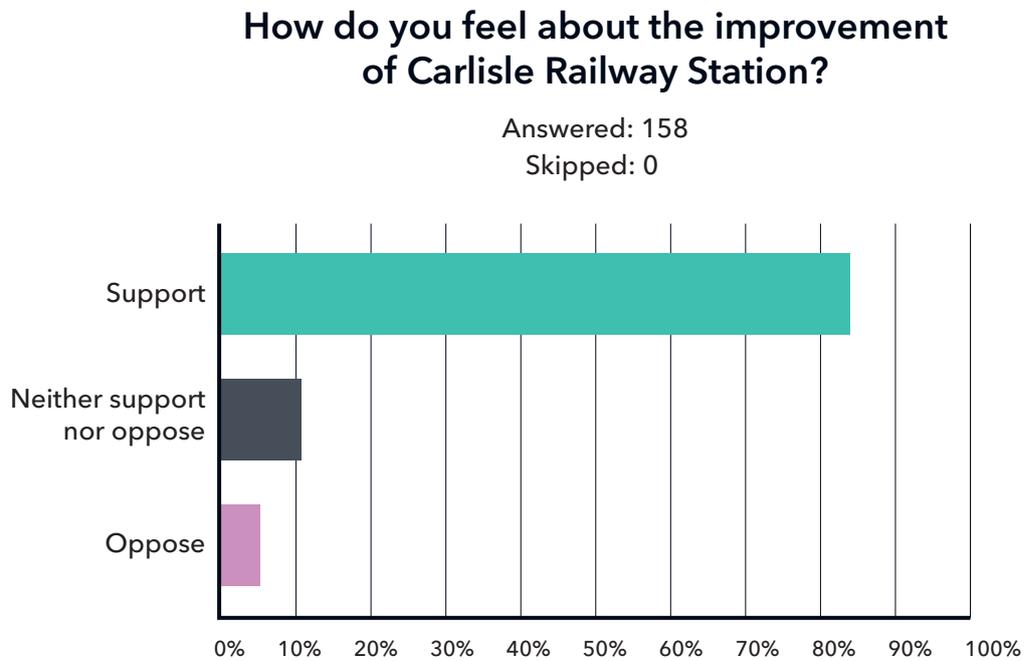
Answered: 147
Skipped: 0



Project support

The feedback received identifies that the majority of respondents support the idea of redeveloping and improving Carlisle Railway Station. Figure 4 shows that 85% of respondents support the project

Figure 4: How do you feel about the improvement of Carlisle Railway Station?

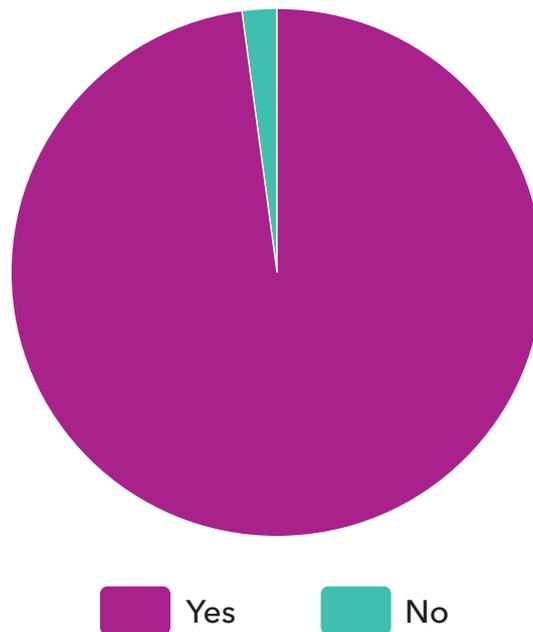


Carlisle Station objectives

The majority of respondents felt that we had correctly identified the key objectives for this project. Figure 5 shows that 98% of respondents said that the objectives were about right compared to 2% that did not agree that these were the key objectives. Respondents did use this question to suggest additional elements to be considered when progressing with the project.

Figure 5: Station objectives feelings

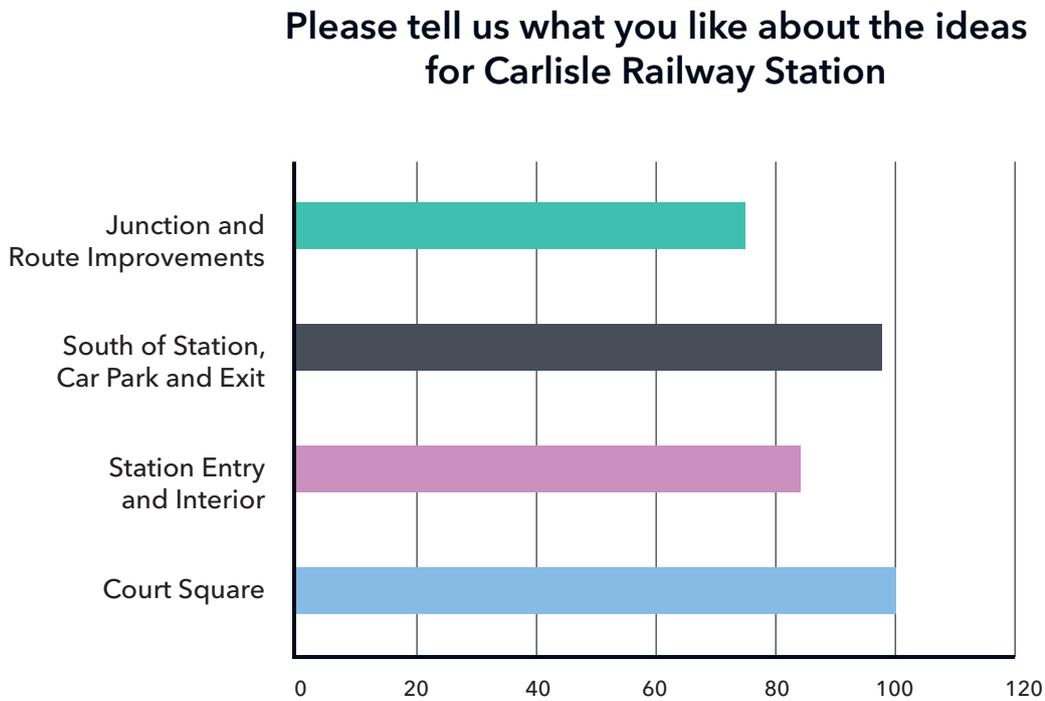
Do you think our objectives for the station are about right? Are there any you would add?



What ideas do you like about Carlisle Railway Station?

Respondents did show overall support for the project however the areas in which they felt the strongest towards were the improvements to Court Square and the South of Station, Car Park and Exit.

Figure 6: What ideas do you like about Carlisle Station?



What did you not like about the ideas for Carlisle Station?

Overall there were no elements of the plans for Carlisle Station that were strongly disliked by the respondents. The respondents did provide further areas for consideration as the project progresses. Items for further consideration include:

- ❖ Cycle provision needs to be included in any future plans.
- ❖ How the Turkish Baths sits within the overall development. The Turkish Baths currently sits outside the red line boundary of the project.
- ❖ Improvement to signage.

Issues and opportunities

For consultation purposes, we divided the Carlisle Railway Station area into four parts with different issues and opportunities.

- ❖ Court Square.
- ❖ Station Entry and Interior.
- ❖ South of Station, Car park and Access.
- ❖ Junction Improvements.

Feedback from the consultation is summarised below.

Court Square

Court square is the primary gateway into Carlisle Railway Station but does not provide a good first impression of the city. The consultation document highlighted the following issues at Court Square:

- ❖ Problems with congestion and access to the station.
- ❖ Difficult to access the existing car park.
- ❖ Too many cars and pedestrians both trying to use the area at the same time.
- ❖ A poor-quality and cluttered environment that creates a poor first impression of the city.

The redevelopment of Carlisle Railway Station plans to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and improve pedestrian safety. This aims to reduce clutter whilst enhancing the appearance of the square to improve visitors' first impressions of Carlisle. The feedback on the plans for Court Square were positive with 61% of respondents in favour of the proposal.

The comments received focus on pedestrian safety and the improvement in appearance to Court Square.

As a result of the positive feedback received the option of making Court Square more pedestrian friendly will be further developed and presented within the consultation period.

This project also encourages the development of retail opportunities within Court Square.

Respondents expressed the preference for local retailers, rather than allowing larger retail and café chains to dominate Court Square. A number of respondents stated that there are currently empty retail spaces in the city centre, and therefore the focus should be on filling these before creating more retail space. Concerns were raised that if there were increased retail opportunities around the railway station this would deter people from venturing into the city centre.

As a result of the feedback at the next consultation we will present options for new retail opportunities at Court Square in parallel with proposals for improving the retail offer and public realm within Carlisle city centre.

Station Entry and Interior

The entry and interior into Carlisle station is currently underwhelming. The consultation document highlighted the following issues with the station entry and interior.

- ✦ The experience of arriving in the station can be underwhelming, and there is not enough space in the entrance area for passengers to pass through or to queue for/collect tickets.
- ✦ The station facilities are not user-friendly and many spaces inside the station are not used to their full potential.
- ✦ The station would benefit from more shops and cafés.

Respondents commented that improvements made to Carlisle station should enhance the user experience. A number of suggestions were made to how to improve the user experience within the station. These improvements include:

- ✦ More waiting rooms.
- ✦ Sheltered seating on the platforms.
- ✦ Wi-Fi facilities.
- ✦ Improved signage.
- ✦ Remove the smoking area from the entrance of the station.

As a result of this feedback at the next consultation we will present options which have taken into consideration the options presented above.

Carlisle Railway Station is a Grade II listed building and was originally opened in 1847. The historical integrity to Carlisle Railway Station was outlined as being important to the respondents that completed the questionnaire.

Around a fifth of respondents identified that protecting and enhancing historic buildings and places as the most significant factor within the project. Comments were given expressing concerns relating to maintaining the historic integrity of Carlisle Railway Station and further concerns relating to the surrounding historic buildings like the Citadels and Turkish Baths. The comments made will be taken into consideration and the project team will work Historic England and Railway Heritage Trust both to maintain and enhance the historic integrity of the station.

The proposed retail plans for Carlisle Railway Station received a relatively positive response from respondents. Suggestions given by respondents identified the need for a variety of retail options within the station for example retail facilities like a food store.

South of Station, Car Park and Access

In regard to the south of the station, car park and access, the consultation document highlighted the following issues:

- ❖ Not enough car parking for current or future users of the station.
- ❖ Poor access into the Southern entrance of the station via Collier Lane.
- ❖ Southern entrance is underutilised.
- ❖ Poor quality environment.

A significant proportion of the respondents identified that they were unaware of the existence of the station's southern entrance. Those respondents who were aware of the entrance however identified that they would welcome moderations to this entrance which included improved lighting.

Respondents reacted positively to the proposed car parking improvements and understood the necessity of increasing the car parking facilities at the station. Approximately 30% of respondents identified increased car parking availability and access within their top three most significant issues at Carlisle Railway Station.

Respondents felt that the current pick up and drop off facilities at the station need improving as the current system is dangerous for the pedestrians in Court Square. Respondents suggested that the creation of a new pick up and drop off point should be located at the southern entrance. As a result of the comments provided, we will look into the viability of this as a potential option and present these findings at the next consultation.

A small minority of respondents suggested that the consultation focuses too heavily on car parking improvements. These respondents did however identify that improvements to the station's car parking facilities are necessary. Comments were suggested that a greater emphasis should be placed on the promotion of improving the appeal for public transport and greener modes of transport. This will be explored further by the project team.

Junction and Route Improvements

Current issues raised within the consultation document include the following issues:

- ✦ Improvements are needed to surrounding streets and junctions if the proposals are to succeed.
- ✦ Improvements are required to help people to get to, and travel around the station more easily.
- ✦ Pedestrian/cycle routes between the city centre and the station are not direct and involve crossing busy roads.

Approximately 51% of respondents identified that they support the proposed junction and route enhancements and agree that these are necessary to allow the project to proceed.

A small minority of respondents did express concerns over improvements to the junctions and routes resulting in additional traffic lights and extra congestion within the city centre. We are aware of this issue and are conducting a Transport and Movement Plan to effectively plan how future traffic will flow around the city.

The feedback received highlighted that respondents felt like they needed more detail surrounding the junction and route improvements. A number of respondents suggested that detailed drawings of the proposed improvements would be useful. Drawings will be readily available at the next consultation.

Respondents reacted positively towards the proposed cycle provision in the area surrounding the station. Respondents did highlight that not enough information surrounding these improvements were presented in the consultation. We will ensure that more detail is available at the next consultation.

Further Comments

Respondents were asked to provide further comments surrounding the project. The majority of the comments provided fall under the following themes.

Turkish Baths

The Turkish Baths is a Grade II listed building and is located on James Street. During the consultation period, the future of the Turkish Baths was raised.

Plans to demolish The Pools which are connected to the Turkish Baths has caused concern from respondents about the future of the Turkish Baths.

Some respondents highlighted that the Turkish Baths were outside the project's red line boundary. The Victorian Health Suite (sometimes known as the Turkish Baths) will remain in the ownership of the City Council after The Pools closes and the new Sands Centre redevelopment is in place. The City Council is looking at how best it can be managed in the future.

Transport Interchange

Another theme that arose from the consultation was for the development of a transport interchange. Respondents identified that in the proposed plans a transport interchange should be created.

Respondents raised a number of issues regarding the current bus station which included the to the bus station being difficult to locate to non-locals to the city and also the lack of facilities in the bus station.

We will engage with public transport operators to explore the viability of creating a transport interchange.

Consultation promotion

Respondents also raised further suggestions in regards the consultations promotion. For example respondents suggested that the consultation materials and signage could be placed in other local stations close to Carlisle, such as Penrith, Oxenholme and Dalston.

Conclusions

Summary of consultation

Overall, the results of the public consultation demonstrated significant support for the project.

The responses gathered showed that 98% of respondents identified that we had correctly identified the objectives for the project. Respondents did show overall support for the project, however the areas in which they felt the strongest towards were the improvements to Court Square and the south of station, car park and exit.

Other information that was received concerned the need to consider a transport interchange, the Turkish Baths and improved cycle provision.

Next steps

The comments that included suggestions for improvements for the project have been recorded. These will be considered and incorporated where practical and possible in the future scheme development.

The results of the consultation will be published to provide all stakeholders with the outcomes of the consultation.

Following the consultation we will start to develop scheme options which we will present at the next consultation in early 2020.

